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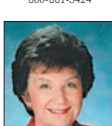
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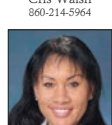
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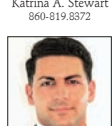
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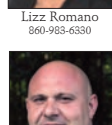
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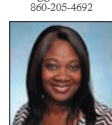
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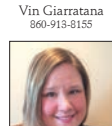
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Wethersfield
Spacious ranch, 3BD/2BA, gas heat, c/a, thermo-pane windows, 1st flr laundry, 2 car attached garage. 10' foyer, XL living rm w floor to ceiling bay window. Enclosed porch, sunny kitchen, wood fp, h/w.
Lisa-Bowman.com 860-983-6789



Wethersfield
Charm of the 1920's greets Pottery Barn in this 4BD Colonial. The remodeled kitchen w new cabinetry, quartz countertops & flooring is just the start! XL dining space, sun-filled LR and enclosed porch.
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Wethersfield
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Wethersfield
Open two bd ranch style condo w fp. Master bd suite has custom built-ins & 8 ft walk-in closet. Master bath w walk-in shower, double sink vanity, & Jacuzzi tub. HOA fee includes heat, hot water & c/a.
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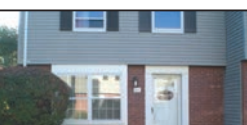
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Spacious 3BD Ranch w in-law apartment in fully finished lower level. Eat-in kitchen, hardwood floors throughout, fireplace living room. Sunroom overlooks yard & stone walls, gardens, fence.
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Wethersfield
Sun-filled ranch w spacious living rm w fp, remodeled kitchen, dining rm, 2 bedrooms & extra lg remodeled bath. Hardwood floor, freshly painted interior, thermo-pane windows, c/a & 5 year old roof.
Lisa-Bowman.com 860-983-6789



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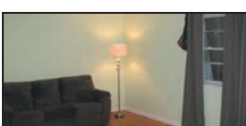
Rocky Hill
Open flr plan, high ceil, gas fp. Custom kit w cherry, granite, mill work opens to dining area & leads to stone patio w built in gas grill. 5B/3+BA, 1st flr master, loft overlooks LR. Finished LL.
DonnaDargie.com 860-883-5419



Rocky Hill
Spacious 4 BD Colonial in a convenient location, w eat-in kitchen w island & table space, fireplace, hardwood. Updated baths, new windows, great rec room in lower level, in ground pool, 16x16 deck.
JoyceCianci.com 860-760-5983



South Windsor
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Katrina-Stewart.com 860-819-8372



Windsor
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CristinaWalsh.com 860-214-5964



Newington
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DickPeplau.com 860-463-2288



Newington
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Lisa-Bowman.com 860-983-6789



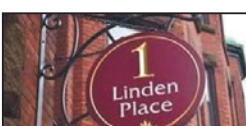
Newington
Remodeled Colonial; state of the art kitchen w Granite, cherry, center isle, recessed lighting, 6-burner stove, ss appliances. French doors to stone patio. Bathrooms w granite vanities & new tubs.
CristinaWalsh.com 860-214-5964



Portland
55+ features elevator, community pub w grand piano, library & computer room, movie theater, exercise room and gracious lobby. 1 bd unit, 9 ft ceilings, wood flrs, washer/dryer in unit, 1 car garage.
DonnaDargie.com 860-883-5419



East Hartford
Newly remodeled spacious 4BD/2BA Colonial. Recessed lighting, cozy fp, hardwood & newly tiled flooring, large fenced in yard, garage with newer doors, renovated bathrooms, absolute move in condition.
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Daniel Hardrick 860-268-2169



Glastonbury
Move right into this contemporary colonial. Substantial upgrades, wooded lot next to conservation land. 2 story great room, gas fire place, neutral, balcony, spacious top of line kit, 2nd fl laundry.
HelenKrzyszynski.com 860-205-7063



Middletown
Remodeled Colonial; state of the art kitchen w Granite, cherry, center isle, recessed lighting, 6-burner stove, ss appliances. French doors to stone patio. Bathrooms w granite vanities & new tubs.
CristinaWalsh.com 860-214-5964



Middletown
Updated Ranch style 3BD Cape w Open floor plan & vaulted ceilings. New: HW floors, windows, vinyl siding, roof, lighting, forced hot air furnace, water heater, electrical, plumbing, paved drive.
Lina D'Angelo 860-380-7121



Middletown
Expanded Cape w flexible floor plan on cul d sac centrally located near town. Large level backyard. Fresh paint, neutral interior, new flooring, appliances & roof. 1st flr bedroom, walkout LL, garage.
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Lina D'Angelo 860-380-7121



Cromwell
Completely renovated 3+BR/2+BA, custom kitchen w granite & stainless. Hardwood. New 2 zone high efficiency heating system & central air. Updated bathrooms. Trex deck, wooded, fire pit in backyard.
DonnaDargie.com 860-883-5419



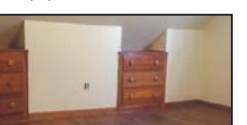
Cromwell
Updated 3BD unit at Fox Meadow Complex! Large open LR, DR & kitchen. Fireplace, hardwood floors, SS Appl, interior balcony, loft style bedrooms, large Master, vaulted ceilings, remodeled baths.
SandraWhitaker.com 860-760-5959



Southington
Immaculate custom built contemporary; 3,559+ sq ft. Chef's Kitchen, luxurious baths, finished basement trex deck, cathedral ceilings, stone gas fp, hardwood floors, tray ceilings, 9 sp garage, 7 acres.
Vinnie Giarratana 860-913-8155



Meriden
Spacious 4BR/2BA. Move right in to this home with a newer roof, siding, and windows! Recently converted to natural gas heat! Updated bath and newer full bath. Garage. Close to schools!
MaureenHorowitz.com 860-205-9678



New Britain
3 bedroom Cape Cod w 1st floor master. 2 large bedrooms on second floor. Eat-in kitchen. Attached car garage. Wood burning stove. Just waiting for your t/c to make it your perfect home. Short Sale
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Wethersfield LIFE

March 2017

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QUOTE OF NOTE:

"We're talking hundreds of millions of dollars. We are losing so much money."

– State Rep. Antonio Guerrero

See story page 7

ON THE COVER

Aleysha Rivera-Delgado, 19, a student at Wethersfield Transition Academy, works in the supply loading area of Jo-Ann Fabrics and Crafts in Newington.

Photo by Lisa Brisson

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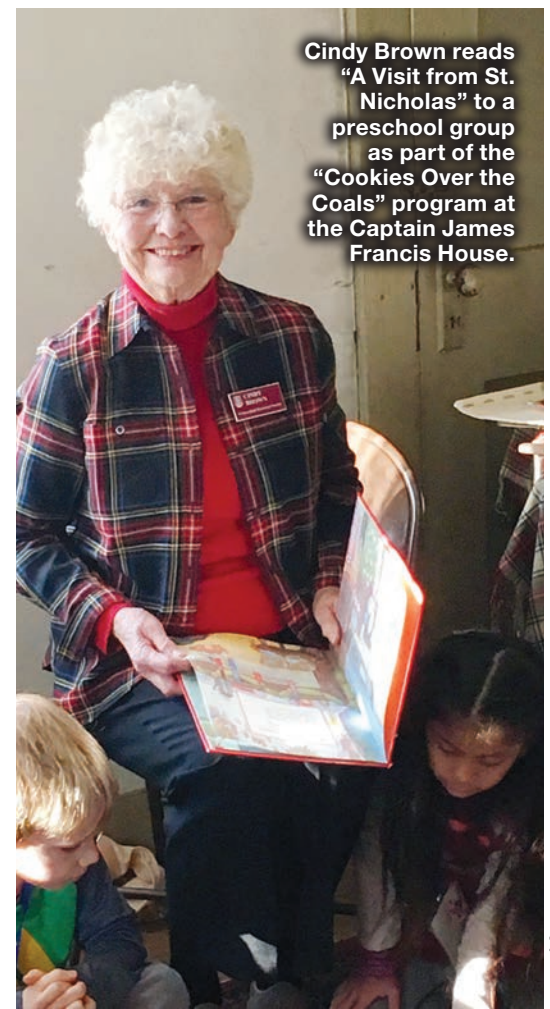
Martha Smart serves as the society's volunteer research librarian at the Old Academy.



Frank Winiarski, dressed in an original guard's uniform, leads a walking tour of the former Connecticut State Prison site on State Street.



Jon Wittorff dressed in an authentic World War II paratrooper's uniform for a presentation to a U.S. History class from Wethersfield High School.



Cindy Brown reads "A Visit from St. Nicholas" to a preschool group as part of the "Cookies Over the Coals" program at the Captain James Francis House.

Courtesy photos

Marking 85 years

Wethersfield Historical Society
celebrates its past and present

by Mark Jahne
Editor

The Wethersfield Historical Society has spent the past 85 years providing research and educational programming about this town's rich history. It is planning a variety of activities this year to celebrate that longevity and encourage more public participation and support.

"We have a lot of exciting things coming up this year," Executive Director Amy Northrop Wittorff said.

"We want this 85th to revitalize, reenergize," Thomas Gworek, a member of the society's board of directors, said.

Wittorff is the society's executive director. Her organization is feeling the pinch of the state's

budget woes and recently had to reduce the size of its staff.

"It's a struggle to make ends meet every year. One of our main sources of income is rental of the Keeney Memorial Cultural Center," she said.

The state of Connecticut was one of the most frequent renters but those meetings have been reduced significantly as one of the many steps being taken to reduce a more than \$1 billion budget deficit.

Wittorff explained that the society's four primary sources of income are fundraisers, donations, grants and rental of the Keeney building at 200 Main St. Major funders included the Robert Allan Keeney Memorial Fund, Richard M. Keane Foundation and Joseph F. Stackpole Foundation.

She pledges not to let reduced

income prevent the society from fulfilling its mission of providing educational, historic and cultural programs to the public.

"We've really concentrated our work on our educational programs. We have a fabulous relationship with the Wethersfield Studies class at Wethersfield High School," she said. "We've put together some really wonderful hands-on programs for students" of all grades.

Wittorff said the society benefits from many dedicated volunteers. Many people also take advantage of its library to perform historic research and Martha Smart is an integral part of that operation. There is no charge for this service.

The society is in the midst of a membership drive. Members not only support the society with

their dues, they also serve as its governing body.

"We want to get more people in the community involved," she said.

Wittorff is frustrated that many residents do not understand the separate roles of the Wethersfield Historical Society and two other major players in town, the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum and Historic District Commission.

The WDS museum is owned and operated by the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Connecticut. The HDC is a government-appointed body that operates through the town Building Department.

They all share an interest in preserving the historic nature and look of Connecticut's "most ancient town" but operate independently of one

Courtesy photos



Members of the 2016-17 Governing Board of the Wethersfield Historical Society include, top from left, C. Michael O'Halloran, Michael Mendoza, Thomas Gworek, Beverly Lucas and Mary Beth Jordan; seated from left, Bruce Bockstael, Elaine St. Onge, Dorene Ciarcia and President Sheila Hennessey.

another. The historical society is not a part of town government and does not receive town funds.

"We do the town a service. We have a great partnership with the town in preserving some of the historic buildings. It's hard to separate that in people's minds," Gworek said.

"These buildings enrich the town," he added. "These buildings were restored with private money. It didn't cost the town. We were the catalyst."

The historical society owns the Captain John Francis House

Museum and Hurlbut-Dunham House Museum. It leases and manages four other buildings owned by the town: Keeney Memorial Cultural Center, Cove Warehouse Maritime Museum, Deming-Standish House and the Old Academy, which serves as its headquarters.

The Deming-Standish House is sublet to Lucky Lou's Bar and Grill as another source of income. The society is responsible for the upkeep of the four town-owned properties.

"We're the oldest and largest historic district in the state of

Connecticut and that's why Old Wethersfield looks the way it does now," Wittorff said.

Longtime WHS member Dorcas McHugh serves on the advisory board and was instrumental in acquiring the Keeney building from the town. The former school sat vacant for many years.

She recalled the challenge of bringing the old building back to life after being vacant for many years and falling into disrepair. The society needed to raise \$1.3 million to make that happen.

"Raising the funds to renovate it was the hard part. It took us 10 years. We did it with the cooperation of the whole town," McHugh said. "We had wonderful cooperation from the town."

Major donors are honored with plaques or rooms named after them. The project took longer than expected because they wanted to make sure the old building was compliant with modern handicapped access requirements as stated in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

McHugh said the historical society and the other historically based organizations in town, such as the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum, have established a cooperative relationship over the years.

Upcoming events

March 9

Lecture Series –
Katherine Hepburn:
From Hartford to Hollywood

March 19

The Jolly Beggars in concert

April 8

Taste of Wethersfield

May 9

The Significance of the
Wethersfield Raid in the
Pequot War

May 17

Seven Generations

May 21

Foraging Walking Tour

May 23

Strawberry Moon
Thanksgiving Celebration

June 3

House Tour –
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Courtesy photos

"We're really in a good spirit now," she said.

She added that, despite some peoples' belief to the contrary, all Wethersfield Historical Society members do not live in Old Wethersfield. They are scattered evenly throughout the town and many live in other communities.

As important as the Colonial

times may be, they also like to look at the more recent developments.

"We're not a bunch of old fogies talking about the Indian wars," Gworek said with a smile.

He encourages people to visit the society's website and enjoy the wealth of information posted on it. Wittorff added that the society provides free programs to the town's

schools while charging a fee to out-of-town schools and organizations.

She encourages anyone interested in volunteering at the Keeney Center to give her a call.

Members of the 2016-2017 Governing Board of the Wethersfield Historical Society are Bruce Bockstael, Dorene Ciarcia, Thomas Gworek, Sheila Hennessey, Mary

Beth Jordan, Jeffrey Kotkin, Richard Kuzmak, Beverly Lucas, Michael Mendoza, C. Michael O'Halloran, Elaine St. Onge, William Philbrick and Raul Rodriguez. [WL](http://wethersfieldhistory.org)

The Wethersfield Historical Society was established in 1932. To learn more call 860-529-7656 or visit wethersfieldhistory.org.

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Has its time come?

Antonio Guerrero seeks support for electronic tolls on two major highways

by Mark Jahne
Editor

At a time when the state seems to be hemorrhaging money, state Rep. Antonio "Tony" Guerrero sees a mountain of cash primed for the taking. He sees millions of dollars of potential revenue driving on state highways every day.

Guerrera is the co-chairman of the state legislature's transportation committee. His district covers Rocky Hill and portions of Newington and Wethersfield.

He has long been an advocate of returning highway tolls to Connecticut. There used to be toll booths on I-95, the Merritt Parkway, and several Hartford area bridges including Bissell, Charter Oak and

Putnam, among other locations.

Those booths disappeared following a fiery crash at a toll plaza in Stratford in January 1983 when a truck driver allegedly fell asleep at the wheel and slammed into a line of traffic waiting to pay the toll.

Seven people died in an inferno that left blackened vehicles scattered all around the scene. Within a few years, all of the toll booths in the state were gone. So was all the money they produced.

Technology has changed over the past three decades and those states that collect tolls these days do it by electronic means rather than at concrete plazas along the road. It's much safer and less annoying to motorists and Guerrero is confident it's the way to go.

He started calling for electronic tolls five years ago and was a lone voice in the wilderness. Not anymore. He said legislators from both sides of the aisle are speaking with him about their increasing interest in his plan.

He admits to being a car buff and said that is what originally got him thinking about this topic. The state has for many decades relied upon its gasoline tax – one of the highest in the nation – to provide the funds to maintain its bridges, highways and other transportation infrastructure.

According to the American



Petroleum Institute, Connecticut charges 39.85 cents in combined taxes per gallon of gas. Add on the 18.40 cents per gallon of federal excise tax and it costs motorists more than 58 cents in taxes to purchase one gallon of gasoline.

Modern cars are either all electric, hybrid or much more



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fuel-efficient than even the recent past. That means drivers are buying less gasoline and the gas tax revenue is steadily dropping. Another means has to be found to provide needed transportation money.

"We can't support our roads and bridges through the gas tax," Guerrero said. "The feds haven't raised the federal gas tax since 1993."

He smiled as he recalled the early years of his electronic toll campaign.

"When I first started they looked at me like, what are you doing? The momentum is changing," he said.

Now, one by one, fellow legislators are coming to realize that the days of the gas tax being a prime source of state revenue are over.

He has already researched whether Connecticut would lose federal funding if it reinstituted tolls and the answer is no. Several other northeastern and mid-Atlantic states already have electronic tolls. Massachusetts recently replaced its toll plazas along the Massachusetts Turnpike with such a system.

Those who regularly use the highways can buy a transponder and load money on it. Each time they pass under what is called a gantry holding a scanning device, the appropriate amount of money would be deducted from their account.

Those who do not want a transponder can simply drive the highways the way they always have. The

"We're talking hundreds of millions of dollars. We are losing so much money."

– State Rep. Antonio Guerrero

scanners would capture the data from their car as it passes beneath them and a bill would be mailed.

This billing data would be linked to the state Department of Motor Vehicles and entered into a reciprocal agreement with DMVs in other states. Failure to pay would result in rejection the next time the vehicle is due for registration or the owner for license renewal, the same system that exists now for those who

don't pay their property taxes.

He is confident that because the cost would be low, most people would readily pay.

"The best part of this is, if we can implement this, we can start to lower the gas tax," Guerrero said.

There is also a great deal of money that could be generated from truckers and other through traffic.

State of the Town breakfast in Wethersfield, he called the amount of money that could be raised astronomical.

"That's huge. We're talking hundreds of millions of dollars. We are losing so much money," he said. "If we don't do it now ... we're already behind the 8-Ball."

State government sometimes draws money from its general fund to cover transportation needs. It would no longer have to do that if electronic tolls are installed.

Guerrera wants this money to go into a legally mandated lock-box so that it can only be used for transportation infrastructure and cannot be raided for other uses. He estimates that as much as 92 cents of every dollar collected would be profit.

"Our roads and our bridges are in bad shape. We need to be proactive," he said.

"The bottom line is a reduced gas tax, in-state discounts for Connecticut residents and millions of dollars to fix our infrastructure." **WL**

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From blight to bright

New apartments proposed for former Fun Zone property

by Mark Jahne
Editor

Hartford had its “Butt-Ugly Building.” Wethersfield has its Fun Zone.

The long vacant and decaying eyesore at the north edge of the city’s downtown district that bore this unflattering name eventually came down. Now the abandoned Silas Deane Highway property that many Wethersfield residents might vote the number-one eyesore in town may finally disappear from the landscape as well.

Lexington Partners, LLC, of Hartford, featuring Wethersfield resident Martin Kenny as its principal, is proposing to redevelop the abandoned and run-down

Martin Kenny, principal of Lexington Partners LLC and a Wethersfield resident, is delighted to propose his first redevelopment project in his hometown.



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children's arcade property at 1178 Silas Deane. His plan is to create a mixed-use development called The Borden that would be anchored by a 120-unit apartment building.

The tentative plan was reviewed as part of the town's pre-application review process. Local leaders are thrilled that someone is proposing a new use for that parcel of slightly more than three acres.

Mayor Paul Montinieri and Peter Gillespie, town director of planning and economic development, both spoke with high hopes about this project at the recent State of the Town breakfast sponsored

by the Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce. Gillespie pointed out that it has been nearly 30 years since any new apartments were

"I love what I do. I love creating something from nothing. This is even better."

-Martin Kenny

constructed in town.

Another, smaller apartment development is proposed across town at the northern end of

Ridge Road.

Lexington Partners chose The Borden as the name of its project because the parcel, just south of the

state highway's intersection with Mill Street, was once the Borden Dairy Farm. The land is zoned as regional-commercial.

"When the [town] Redevelopment Agency first got formed, this was one of the projects on the list," Gillespie said.

It was also a targeted property in the town's 2008 master plan for the redevelopment of the Silas Deane.

Tentative plans call for the razing of the decaying Fun Zone structure and re-grading of the site. Part of the land is in a flood zone, although the Fun Zone building is not. A five-story apartment building would be erected containing a 7,550-square-foot restaurant and 3,000 square feet of retail and



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service space on the first floor.

There would be 16 studio apartments, 64 one-bedroom units and 40 two-bedroom units. It would include solar parking spaces, a fitness center and a dog park.

"We're very supportive of the concept," Gillespie said. "This is the kind of project that the Silas Deane Master Plan envisioned. It's pretty exciting."

Access would be from both the Silas Deane and Mill Street through an agreement with the neighboring property. Barton Partners of Pennsylvania is the architect. Close, Jensen & Miller, P.C. is handling the site and grading plan while Fuss & O'Neill, Inc. crafted a shared parking analysis.

Construction, once approved, is estimated to take 18 months.

Kenny is a Griswold Road resident whose company has constructed apartments and other buildings in numerous Greater Hartford towns, but never in his hometown.

"I was somewhat involved with the CREC school that was built on Cumberland Avenue," he said. "I've been looking for something to do in Wethersfield because I really like the town. This opportunity came along."

His children all grew up in town and attended its schools. He is excited about his concept for The Borden.

"I love doing projects in the town center or the center of a city," he said.

His favorites are those that encourage walking and bicycle riding. That may not be as much the case with The Borden, but he remains enthusiastic. It is being built with young millennials and older empty nesters in mind.

"What drives apartment projects now are communities that have amenities," Kenny said. "The idea is to create some vibrancy."

He is busy finalizing the plans before starting the formal approval process, perhaps as soon as March. The developer is hopeful that his proposal will

not become bogged down in partisan politics, not only because it will provide quality living space, but because it will also rid the community of an eyesore.

"Now that we have the property under agreement, we're finalizing our design. This is a project that's a no-brainer that both sides of the aisle can support," he said. "This is also an opportunity to modernize the drainage system there."

His property is close to a portion of the Silas Deane that historically floods during times of high water. Kenny is willing to take on the additional costs of re-grading the land, environmental remediation and demolishing the old Fun Zone structure.

He wants to create a development that features both quality construction and furnishings and a different look. Kenny is acutely aware that this is the first new apartment complex proposed in town in three decades.

"There's a reason why market rate apartments haven't been built in 30 years. They're expensive," he said.

"I love what I do. I love creating something from nothing. This is even better," he added.

The projected monthly rents will be \$1,100-\$1,300 for studio apartments, \$1,400-\$2,000 for one-bedroom units and \$2,200 for two-bedroom units.

The Borden will require approval from three town land use bodies: planning and zoning, wetlands and design review. It falls under a provision of town regulations that requires a special permit and residents will have an opportunity to comment at a public hearing.

Gillespie said the town is also hopeful that its other significant eyesore, the former Weight Watchers building across the street from the Wethersfield Shopping Center, may finally be redeveloped.

"I met with an interested group and talked with the owner about that group," he said. **WL**



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Photos by Mark Jahne

A grand opening

"Sister Act" spring musical will officially unveil new high school auditorium

by Mark Jahne
Editor

Singing nuns are about to take over the auditorium at Wethersfield High School. Rumor has it the Pope will make an appearance, too.

It's all part of the annual spring production. This year's show is the

musical comedy "Sister Act," based on the motion picture starring Whoopi Goldberg.

It will also mark the official unveiling of the newly renovated and expanded auditorium. The drama group did one performance of "Working" on the new stage this past

year, but the other presentations of that show took place at Webb School while WHS was undergoing a construction project that is now nearing completion.

Director Jeff Roets, who also teaches English, is thrilled to be in this new space. It features improved site lines, state-of-the-art audio and lighting,

The chorus of nuns belts out a tune. "Sister Act" features a lot of singing.

Left: Director Jeff Roets provides instruction during a recent rehearsal.

and more "pit" space for musicians.

This show allows him to provide a performance opportunity to a large number of students.

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"There are 43 kids in the cast, 11 in the pit and a tech crew of 10 to 12," Sondra Blonzaco said.

She has long served as the producer of WHS live theater as well as working as an Open Choice tutor at the school.

Roets said the stage version of "Sister Act" is so new that the music wasn't available through the usual channels. But they found a way to acquire the needed digitized tunes for rehearsals.

"One of our kids, Jack Breton, who is a senior, took it upon himself to make MIDI files for every single song in the show," he said.

"I always pick every show based on the talent that I have available," Roets added.

The available talent this spring is a large number of girls and relatively few boys, so a show with numerous female parts fits the bill nicely. He also needed a lead who can sing gospel, blues and soul, and senior Dalis Irizarry has those skills. She plays lounge singer Deloris Van Cartier, who goes into hiding in the convent as Sister Mary Clarence.

"This show requires somebody who can do all that," he said. "The

girls sing a lot. It is a huge choral show for the nuns."

But that doesn't mean the boys get left out. Roets smiled when he explained that they get to sing some 1970s-style funk.

Other major roles are Will Stabach as the Monsignor, Dina DiMarco as Mother Superior, Anthony DiNallo as Curtis and Connor Wallowitz as Eddie. The newly installed 20 wireless microphones and control panel will come in handy for all that music.

"It's going to be a completely different experience for the audience," he said. "This is probably the most joyous show we've done for a while. It's a show about community, about helping each other."

Each performance will feature the costumed nuns working the aisles for donations. Working through the Interact Club – the high school version of Rotary International – any money collected will be donated to one of three charities.

The cast has dedicated their performances in memory of Vanessa Carbone, a WHS student who died a few months ago of HLH, a disease that affects the immune system.

She appeared in many theatrical

productions. Donations given at Saturday night's show will go to the Cherish the Children Foundation in her honor.

Other designated charities are the South Park Inn and Wethersfield Social and Youth Services. Donations from a special advance performance for senior citizens will benefit the WHS Drama Club.

Roets said the young actors are having a good time with this show. He added that, although they are having fun with their parts, they are playing the roles as scripted.

"Mother Superior is a not a caricature, she's a real person," he said.

One of the most challenging aspects of this show is the large volume of props, sets and general movement on and off the stage. The only drawback to the new auditorium is that it has limited space in the stage wings.

On the brighter side, all of those more than 50-year old chairs held together in some cases by duct tape have been replaced with comfortable new seats.

Roets looks forward to using every possible inch of his new stage. Props will include a disco ball and facsimile firearms that make a loud noise when fired. These are part of the show

"This is probably the most joyous show we've done for a while. It's a show about community, about helping each other."

–Jeff Roets

because Sister Mary Clarence is fleeing from the Las Vegas mob.

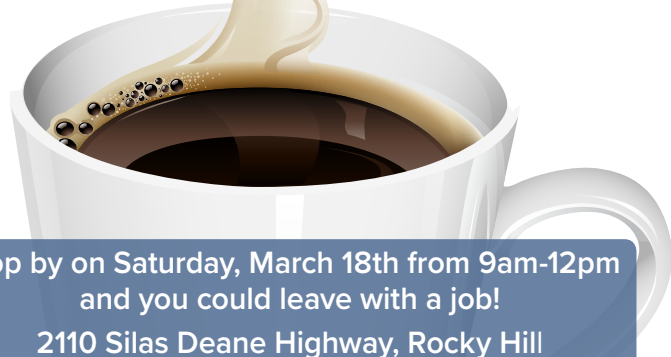
The role of the Pope is a well-guarded secret. All Roets would reveal is that it will be shared by at least two men who are local celebrities.

Evening shows are scheduled for 7:30 p.m. March 10-11 and there is also a 2 p.m. matinee March 11. There will only be one weekend of performances this year, rather than the customary two.

Tickets are available online at ShowTix4u.com at a cost of \$14 for adults and \$10 for students and senior citizens. Tickets at the door will cost \$16 and \$12, respectively. **WL**

More information is available by calling 860-571-8200 ext. 1714.

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News roundup

Museum bonding approved

The State Bond Commission approved a \$1.7 million grant for the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum in Old Wethersfield. The funding will be used to construct a new education and visitor center that will provide education, exhibition and meeting space.

The bonding will ensure the project's completion, supplementing the \$6 million in funding secured by the museum. The new center will allow the museum to remain open year round. It now closes for three months each year because of a lack of heated spaces in which to hold programming.

The Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum manages four historic 18th century homes that are open to the public for tours.



GFWC Newington/Wethersfield Woman's Club members recently participated in a comfort pillow workshop.

McAuliffe, Spicer die

The town lost two prominent residents within a few days of each other when David Spencer and John McAuliffe Jr. both died. McAuliffe, 80 was a member of the Wethersfield Volunteer Fire Department for 42 years, rising to the rank of chief.

He won numerous awards

related to the fire service. A longtime employee of the Metropolitan District Commission, he later served the MDC as a commissioner. He was a lifetime member of the Irish American Home Society and was grand marshal of the Hartford St. Patrick's Day Parade in 2004.

Spicer was the longtime minister of music and the arts at the First Church of Christ in Wethersfield as well as an adjunct professor of music at Tunxis Community College. He came to First Church in October 1986 after serving as director of music at the First Presbyterian Church in

Lincoln, Neb.

He was the house organist at the Bushnell Center for Performing Arts in Hartford and in 1997 co-founded the Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival/USA, a national competition for high school and college student organists.



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Making special pillows

GFWC Newington/Wethersfield Woman's Club members recently participated in a comfort pillow workshop at which a total of 80 pillows were completed. These pillows will be distributed to cancer patients at a local hospital.

Nursing scholarships available

The Wethersfield-Rocky Hill Professional Nurses Association is seeking applicants for its 2017 nursing scholarships. These are available to qualified students pursuing an undergraduate degree in nursing and for registered nurses enrolled in BSN programs.

For more information, or an application packet, contact Judy Sartucci, Scholarship Committee chairman, at nursescholarships@cox.net. The application deadline is March 17.

Woman's club selling Flags of Appreciation

The GFWC Newington/Wethersfield Woman's Club is holding its sixth annual "Flags of Appreciation" sale and display. These American flags come with a personal laminated card attached and are intended to honor a loved one who is a veteran or active service member of the armed forces.

These roughly 17-by-11 inch flags will be displayed at designated sites during Memorial Day parades May 27 in both towns. Proceeds will benefit Fisher House, Manes in Motion, Victory Gardens Apartments for veterans and the state's Stand Down veterans' program.

Each flag costs \$10 and orders should be accompanied by the purchaser's name, address and telephone number. They should also include the name and rank of the veteran, branch of service, dates of service, location of

service and whether it is "in memory" or "in honor of" someone.

Orders may be mailed to: GFWC Newington/Wethersfield Woman's Club, P.O. Box 310046, Newington, CT 06131: attention flag committee. All orders must be received by May 13.

Nature center seeks funds

The Friends of the Eleanor Buck Wolf Nature Center are conducting an exhibit improvement drive. They are busy enhancing the animal exhibits at their facility and replacing the current reptile exhibits with state-of-the-art living quarters designed and constructed by Wethersfield-based John Oldham Studios.

The Friends have provided the funds to begin the project and will honor the names of donors on plaques and in publications. They have already purchased new

exhibit cages and cabinets that businesses, individuals or others are invited to sponsor.

Top dog on display

Wethersfield resident Debbi Bordeaux's Papillon, Silver Grand Champion Draco Bordeaux Mother of Dragons, also called Kaleesi, was among more than 3,000 dogs competing at the 141st Annual Westminster Kennel Club All Breed Dog Show in New York City.

Correction

A story in the last issue about a proposed redevelopment project on the Silas Deane Highway called The Borden reported that it will contain 150 apartments. The correct number is 120. Another 30 apartments are being planned separately on a parcel along Ridge Road, so the total of new apartments proposed between the two projects is 150. **WL**

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Samuel B. Webb	51 Willow Street	Michael Verderame	860-571-8340
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Keeping an eye on tree clearing

Town takes a stand on proposed Brainard Airport safety project

by Mark Jahne
Editor



Courtesy photo

Wethersfield is proud of its distinction as a Tree City USA. So when someone comes along who wants to cut down trees, people take notice.

That is what happened when the Connecticut Airport Authority proposed to remove multiple trees to improve flight path safety around Brainard Airport, located in Hartford's South Meadows on the northern border of town. Residents heard of the plans and a grassroots campaign drew many of them to a meeting where that plan was discussed.

The process was not as open or formal as Mayor Paul Montinieri would have liked. He noted that part of the land in question is within Wethersfield's borders although it was deeded to the city for access purposes.

"The airport authority reached out to the town," he said.

But it did not notify Hartford government and he contended that was a mistake. One reason local

residents took action is because one of the three options for leveling and/or trimming trees stretched as far as the Town Green and Wethersfield Cove.

"We had a packed room because of that," Montinieri said. "It became clear when Mayor [Luke] Bronin showed up that the city of Hartford hadn't been notified."

The Town Council passed a resolution asking the CAA for

there are no funds to pay for tree removal. He believes the runway approach paths are already sufficiently safe.

Given the choices, the council favors the option that selectively removes a minimal number of trees.

Republican Councilor Michael Rell is working with Montinieri on this issue. He said the mayor reached out to him after learning that Rell attended a state informational

"I'm on the airport noise advisory committee and an Old Wethersfield resident. This is about the safety of pilots and nearby residents," Rell said. "I think the public's biggest concern was that they were not properly notified of that option."

Wethersfield had advance knowledge of the plan but he said Hartford, East Hartford and Glastonbury claimed to have received no notification from the authority that oversees the state's airports.

"How can we rectify the situation? Something needs to be done," he said.

Rell added that residents feared the true cutting would be more extensive and negatively impact wildlife and recreation.

His bottom line is that all interested parties need to have full information so that they can provide good feedback to help officials make an informed decision. He would like to see this project put to a full public hearing complete with data, transcripts, and an opportunity for residents and local governments to air their concerns. **WL**

"You need to slow down. We don't support the plan as it was presented."

—Mayor Paul Montinieri

accurate facts, a public hearing and the inclusion of Hartford in the process. It also asked the airport authority to take into account wildlife in the affected area, including bald eagles.

"You need to slow down. We don't support the plan as it was presented," he said.

Montinieri said the Federal Aviation Authority requires that the CAA craft such a plan even though

hearing about the trees.

"A lot of residents in Old Wethersfield, and Wethersfield, are concerned about proposed tree clearing on the edge of the river and Brainard Airport," Rell said.

He explained that the three options available to deal with this project are to do nothing, to clear cut 40 acres near the runway, or to do selective clearing. Like the mayor, he favors the third choice.



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Flag ages determined as of September 1, 2017

*A player's age is determined as of December 31st of the playing year. All Children playing Tackle Football must attend sign-ups to be weighed. The CTYFL has mandatory weight and age rules. NO child outside of the weights and ages listed above is eligible to play. Birth Certificates are required for all Children playing and all "A" Squad players must submit a copy of their 4th term report card indicating that they will not be attending High School during the playing year. Any Child who falls outside the weight limit of his/her Tackle Division will be allowed to move up one division provided they are not overweight in that division as well **Cheerleaders are not bound by weight restrictions.*

****Flag Football will continue to be an in-town league. It remains unchanged from years past. Please visit us on the web for all up to the minute information.*

www.wethersfieldyouthfootball.org

Living your Best LIFE

Finding inspiration for art

Artist William Kluba finds a new career as author

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Despite an early fascination with art, William Kluba's career was almost derailed before it began. Growing up in rural Wisconsin, he clearly remembers the two distinct moments when he first became aware of the power of paint and color.

The first was watching his father work on a paint-by-numbers project when he was 5 or 6.

"I wasn't as enthralled by what he was painting as I was by the paint, the smell of the paint, the density of the color," he said.

A second grade project also had a deep effect.

"We had a Christmas project making cards. She [the teacher] passed out this beautiful piece of ultramarine blue paper. I had never gotten a piece of paper like that before," he said.

"I remember the reaction I had

to the white paint to that beautiful, dark paper. It was just exhilarating."

The rural setting provided plenty of inspiration for the young artist.

"I had nature surrounding me, which was my biggest influence, and still is," Kluba said.

His career was almost derailed by a junior high school art class.

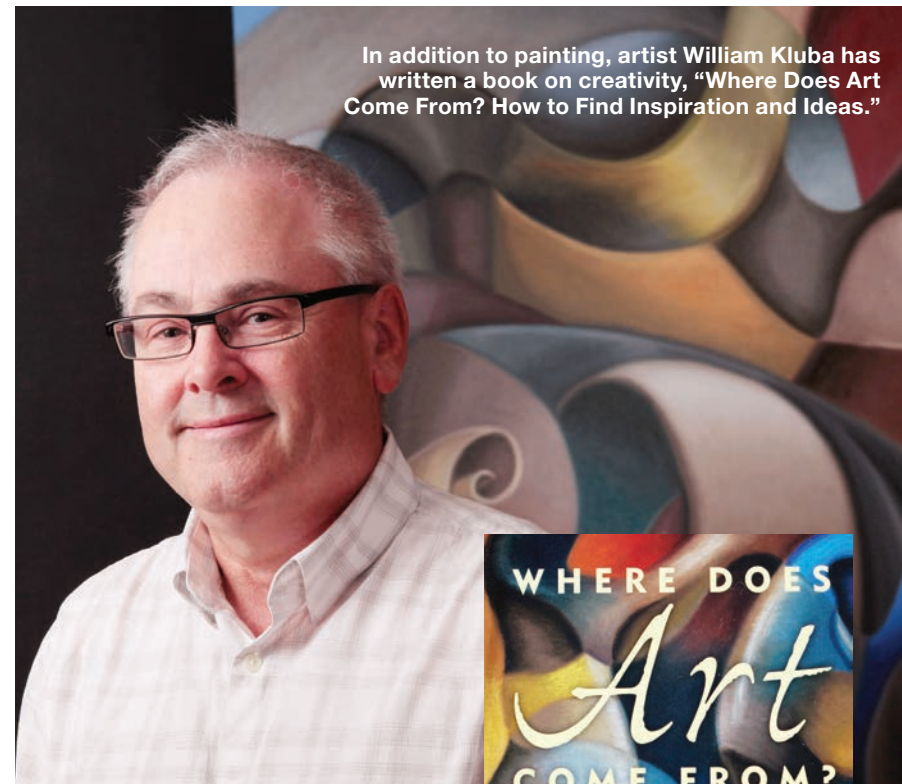
"I was loving what I was doing. We did a lot of drawing, we did puppets. I remember this one particular drawing I did. It was a line drawing and it had a comb in it.

"I remember how detailed I did the comb and he gave me a very bad grade. I had the sense he was wrong, but I never took another art class until college."

Kluba wasn't sure what he would study when he was meeting with his college advisor.

"My girlfriend said, 'You're really good at art, you should take some art classes,'" he recalled.

His advisor revised his schedule to include three art classes as well



In addition to painting, artist William Kluba has written a book on creativity, "Where Does Art Come From? How to Find Inspiration and Ideas."

Courtesy photos

as foreign language, English and science courses.

"That's when I realized that's what I wanted to do," Kluba said.

"It was a very small school, and there were kids in the class who were much better than I was. I had an incredible desire to know. I remember the first drawing I did. It was a life drawing class and there was a model.

"I was doing the part of the drawing where there was a shadow and it really worked. That was the beginning of 'a-ha' moments throughout my career."

He transferred from an extension school of the University of Wisconsin to its main campus in Madison.

"It was a big school and then I was really in my element. I took to art like a duck to water. It was a good program, too," he said.



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After earning his B.S. degree in art education, he earned his M.A. and MFA degrees in art from the school. It was while he was there that he got into teaching as part of the teaching assistant program.

"You taught the class; you weren't even mentored. I applied and got one of the positions; 250 people applied and I got one of the eight [positions]. I was really tickled about that," he said.

"My undergraduate degree is in education. I had student taught elementary school and high school and I didn't like the experience much. It was kind of like a factory. In grade school I taught 750 kids a week. There was barely time to breathe. I didn't like the politics of the school and the other teachers."

His college experience was much different.

"There were 25 students in the classroom and they were all looking at me, but it just fit. It fit from the very first time I walked in. I knew I wanted that to be part of my life at that point," he said.

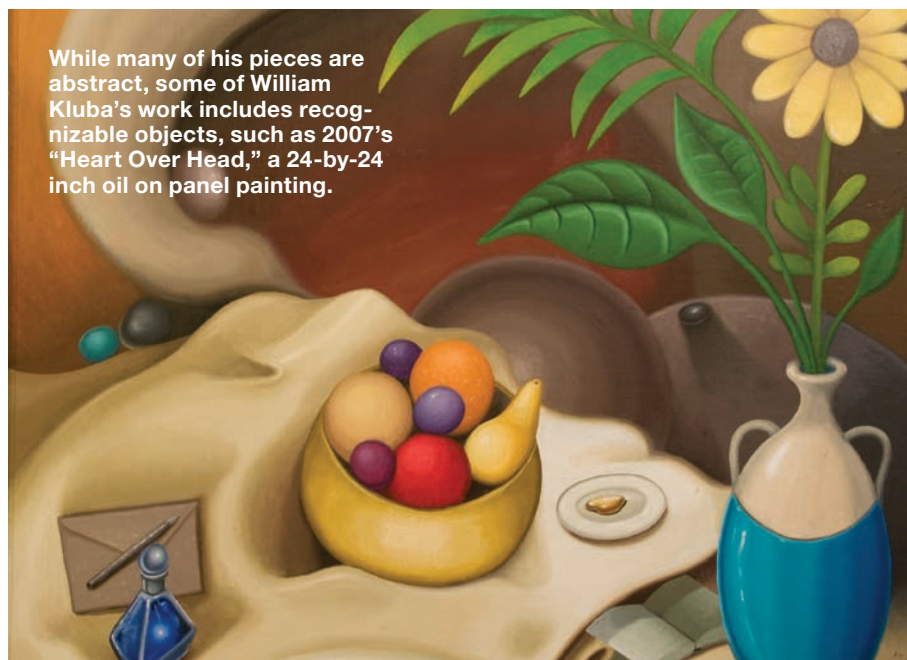
After earning his MFA, he moved east and lived in New York City for a while before coming to Connecticut.

While he taught at the University of Connecticut, he spent the majority of his teaching career at Tunxis Community College, starting as an adjunct professor before becoming full time. He served in a variety of positions before retiring in 2016 as professor of art and program coordinator for visual fine art and photography.

"I really enjoyed sculpture and for a while I thought I'd be a sculptor. Then I realized that my paintings were more dimensional than my sculptures. I could create things in my paintings that I couldn't create in sculpture. I still have an interest that I might pursue later on," he said.

"Space has always been an important part of my work. I like space and light. When I took my first painting course, I fell in love immediately. I was always in the studio, even after classes were over. I was still painting late in the night; that

While many of his pieces are abstract, some of William Kluba's work includes recognizable objects, such as 2007's "Heart Over Head," a 24-by-24 inch oil on panel painting.



Courtesy photos

really hasn't changed that much over the years," he added.

"There's something about the materials and the plasticity about it that allows you to kind of craft anything you can think of. My work has always come from inside out and not the other way around. When I was

younger, I drew from life. That wasn't as interesting to me as intuition creating, but that really helped me develop my skills."

The way he goes about painting has changed as he's developed as an artist.

"Over the years my process

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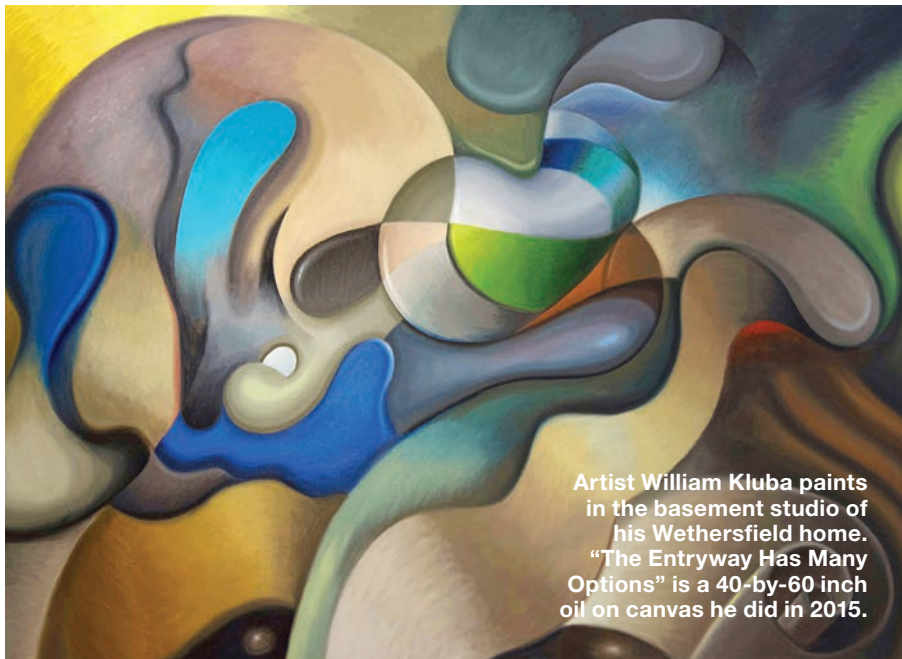
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Living your Best LIFE



Artist William Kluba paints in the basement studio of his Wethersfield home. "The Entryway Has Many Options" is a 40-by-60 inch oil on canvas he did in 2015.

has changed. I used to have a pretty complete drawing underneath before I would start. Now when I start a piece, I have maybe a few marks on the page. I just start making a shape and one shape leads to another shape," Kluba said.

"As I'm working, that can change

too. I'm very flexible in how things turn out. Sometimes I put a million lines on the surface. They're really fluid and I start picking and choosing which I'm going to use. It's almost like I threw out a lot of phrases and I start picking and choosing what I'm going to use.

"I have a lot more freedom than I used to. Painting is easy to start and hard to finish. It speaks to me. I have a relationship. I have a dialogue with the work. As it's being built, it pretty much tells me what to do. The last things to be put on it is the most difficult."

Kluba often paints in oils, although he also does drawings and uses pastels and acrylics. He also does computer art.

"The computer allows me to work in a way I can't work physically. The medium kind of tells me and informs me how it wants to be moved and how it wants to be built. Painting is pretty standardized," he said.

"I found that the digital world is far more imaginative in how I can put something together. I can create something rather quickly. You can bind things that really are not possible with elements or real tools. I can take a watercolor tool and combine it with an oil tool or with an air-brush tool, with a charcoal tool.

"You can make amazing things that you can't create with traditional

materials. Once I started working digitally, it changed the way [I approach] real paintings. It affected them philosophically and it affected them compositionally."

He prints them on canvas.

"They look spectacular," he said, adding that people are often surprised that the work has been created on a computer. "They think I painted it. It is an original piece of work. It's not something I scanned in a computer. I created it. To me, it's another tool, but it's a cool tool."

While Kluba used to paint at night, about 20 years ago he changed his routine when he started to meditate. Now he meditates every morning, eats breakfast and then heads to his basement studio to paint.

After discovering meditation, he went to a program at an ashram in upstate New York.

"They awaken you. It was just phenomenal. I've been doing it ever since. It changes you inside. You learn to be more calm, clearer, more understanding, more compassionate," he said.

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"It made my art much deeper. My art was never superficial, but it got enriched in a way I really didn't anticipate."

Kluba has also found a way to share his creative process far beyond his classroom. He's written a book, "Where Does Art Come From? How to Find Inspiration and Ideas," published by Allworth Press.

The book started when he was on sabbatical about 10 years ago. He jotted down a few pages. Three years ago, while browsing online, he found an art coach in New York named Brainard Carey.

"I read the testimonials, I liked what I saw. You could set up the first appointment for free," he said.

They talked about promoting Kluba's work and he shared that he'd had an idea for a book. Carey assigned him homework: writing down the name of the book, along with every chapter and a summation of each. He had two weeks for the assignment.

"That night I had it finished. It just fell out. Nothing changed when I started writing the book," Kluba recalled.

Carey was impressed and told him to write 1,000 words a day.

"I never really wrote anything in my life. I was on sabbatical again. I wasn't planning to write a book. I was planning on creating art. Five months later it was done," he said.

Carey took it to Allworth Press, where they asked for a synopsis, then a chapter, then the entire book.

"I didn't hear for two weeks, then they emailed me a contract and I was going to be a published author. It was just meant to be," Kluba said.

He's thinking about writing a follow-up book.

"I didn't think it was hard at all. It was really fun," he said.

His book gives people tools to run with their own creativity as well as ways to look at art.

"Bill stresses the importance of the individual pathways we take in our creativity. He considers everything around us that contributes to our unique viewpoints, our experiential knowledge," Hunter Neal Jr., a professor of photography at Tunxis Community College, said.

"In doing so, he has assassinated the preconceived notions we tend to have about what art should be. We should be grateful to him for this,"

Portrait Artist Susan Strauss, an adjunct instructor at Tunxis Community College, first met Kluba when interviewing at the school more than a decade ago.

"When Bill was writing his book, he was in the middle of a really creative period. As he completed each painting, he shared the image. It was amazing to see the art work develop. I really grew to more fully appreciate his palette, the way he captured light and the rhythm of the paintings," she said.

"I kept track of a particular glowing blue light as it traveled around the canvas in painting after painting. There was a point when I thought its journey had ended, but that was not to be. Bill, as well as the light, was not done toying with the viewer," she added.

Kluba knows that different people will see different things in his work and that's fine with him.

"I want them to feel what they feel. This is the interesting thing about art. When I was younger and saw my first Picasso, I didn't relate to it at all. As I began to understand the language of art, I began to



Artist William Kluba's piece "Gray #38" was created in 2016 using an iPad.

Courtesy photos

understand it more," he said.

"It's not about trying to trick you or be elite. Real art is about feeling. When you feel something really strongly and put it on a surface, chances are other people are going to feel it as well. Start going to galleries, museums, see if anything resonates with you.

"It's like a good Leonard Cohen song. He crafts his words in a way that is so magical; he creates an entire universe in a song," Kluba said. "When I'm finished with a piece, I see things I didn't see when I was painting it. So I become a viewer as well." **WL**

Learn more at williamkluba.com.



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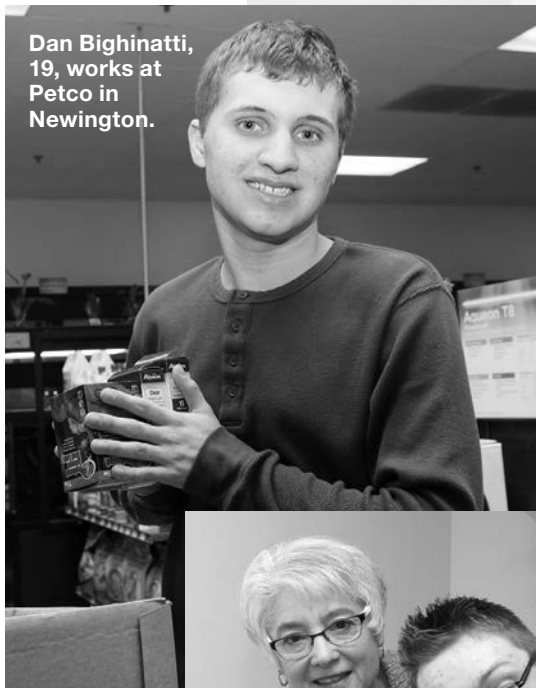
Matthew Hill
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Settling in

Wethersfield Transition Academy now housed in new, larger space

by Mark Jahne
Editor



Dan Bighinatti, 19, works at Petco in Newington.



Kim Fitzner, program coordinator/special education teacher, works with student Chelsea Carilli, 20, on a group fund-raising project. The project has students making dog biscuits from scratch, packaging them and selling them.

Photos by Lisa Brisson



Job coach Diane Chaffin works with student David Dale, 20.



Aleysha Rivera-Delgado, 19, a student at the Wethersfield Transition Academy, works with job coach Kim Messinger at Jo-Ann Fabrics and Crafts.

The Wethersfield Transition Academy had long outgrown its space at the Pitkin Community Center. The first attempt to find larger quarters this past year didn't work out, but now the students and staff are reveling in a more spacious setting at the corner of Nott Street and the Silas Deane Highway.

The program, part of the Wethersfield Public Schools, serves students with special needs who have completed high school through the age of 21, as mandated by state law. They learn all kinds of life skills to help them prepare to function as successful adults.

The former office space WTA now occupies is more than 3,000 square feet larger than what the program had at the Pitkin facility. There are separate areas set up as a conference room, computer lab, bedroom, art room, game room and kitchen.

A large central room serves as a gathering and educational space. Use of the game room has to be earned by achieving various goals.

Superintendent of Schools Michael Emmett, who readily admits to having a soft spot in his heart for this program, and Program Coordinator Kim Fitzner are delighted.

"We learned to share very well," Fitzner said of the old space, which the academy had to share with other groups.

Board of Education member John Cascio, whose office with the Connecticut Funeral Directors Association is across the street, told her about the vacancy at 370 Silas Deane. The administration decided to rent the space and installed a handicapped ramp and all of the necessary security measures.

"We came over and took a look at it and it met our needs," Emmett said.

He added that the first choice was to find a vacant house in town but that was not feasible for several reasons. He likes the new space and pointed out that it is located along a major bus line.

Fifteen students are currently enrolled and one of them is from another district that is paying the town tuition. That was not possible until the space grew and Emmett hopes more towns will send students here to benefit from the program.

"We weren't anticipating being able to do that until next year," he said.

The academy, now six years old, started with only four students. It creates specific education plans for each student and places a major focus on those life skills needed to transition from a scholastic setting into adult life.

"It's individualized for each student. It's not one size fits all," Fitzner said. "Everything is a teachable moment. They're learning while they're having fun. I love my job."

"We find the talents for each of

the kids. The program started from scratch," Emmett added.

These educational plans look into what each student likes and what kind of career he or she wishes to pursue. There is a significant focus on vocational education and students go off to internships or paid work sites three days a week.

Each has and manages his or her own bank account. They learn how to write a check and use a debit card. There is also a physical fitness piece to the program and lessons in telephone skills.

They learn such diverse skills as sewing, carpentry, how to utilize public transportation and safety around the home. They also benefit from a Best Buddies mentoring program with students from Trinity College in Hartford.

All of the students track their progress on time cards and in journals. They learn how to write resumes to help them find a job. Role playing and group activities also help in this area. The academy has a burgeoning dog treat business and Fitzner said these always sell well.

Lessons learned in the classroom are taken in to the community, such as the day they all dined at Denny's and practiced how to order a meal and

interact in a public setting. The dog treat proceeds pay for these outings.

"We work with the other transition academies," Fitzner said, to plan outings and group activities.

There are a total of five such academies in the Hartford region. She is always looking to create relationships for her students with local businesses.

"If we can partner with the community, it's a win-win," she said.

These businesses accept students who come with job coaches for a variety of positions and educational opportunities. Some of those turn into paying jobs.

"They're just growing here. We're so successful because we're with them all day long. We slowly back off as the student becomes more independent," Fitzner said.

"We are very proud to host several students at the Stillman building," Emmett said.

That's where the school district's central offices are located. He said the WTA students are polite, conscientious and loved by his staff. Both he and Fitzner said teaching them important social skills is a key to the program's success.

Emmett enjoys watching them



Photos by Lisa Brisson

The Wethersfield Transition Academy students show off the Valentine's Day dog biscuits they made and are packing for sale as part of a group fundraiser.

grow and develop into young adults.

"I thoroughly enjoy going to the graduation ceremony. They talk about their influences and how far they've come," he said.

Some of them take on leadership roles and mentor the others. Fitzner teaches those leaders the importance of delegating tasks to help their peers grow.

"The camaraderie is unique for this program. They pull for each other," Emmett said.

The students start off every academic year by working together to design a scarecrow for inclusion in the

Scarecrows Along Main exhibit in Old Wethersfield. One year they used Emmett as the model for their creation. He still smiles at that.

Fitzner said the state Department of Developmental Services helps the students transition into programs that are designed for those over the age of 21.

"Right now, there's a waiting list for that," she said.

Some of them go on to work or college. Others receive assistance from the state Bureau of Rehabilitation Services. Both state programs are accompanied by a significant amount of paperwork. **WL**

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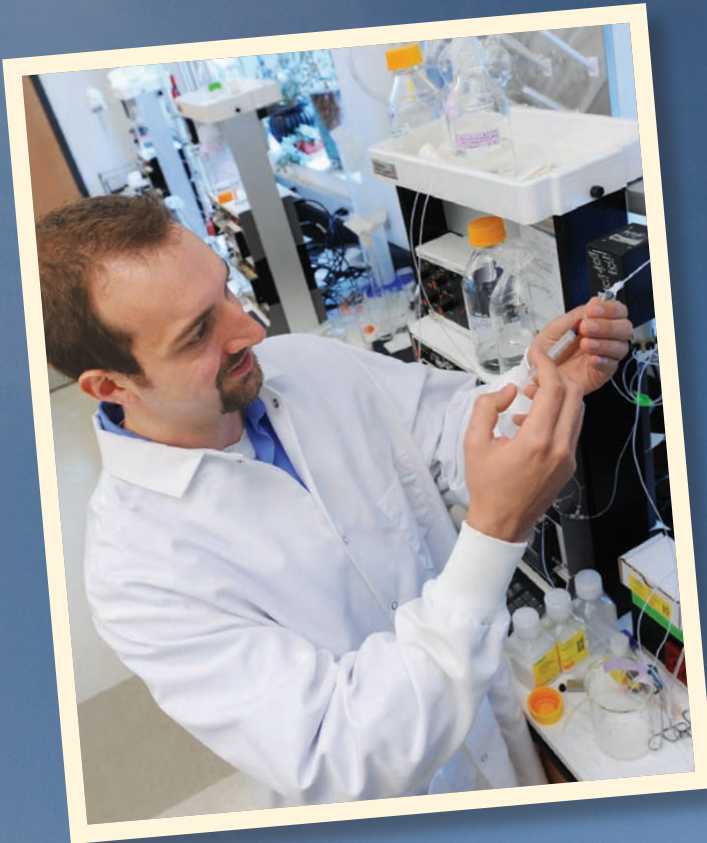


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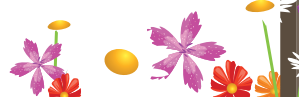


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ROCKY HILL \$289,900
RANCH. WOW! Modern home with new kitchen and baths, windows, roof and more. Finished lower level. 1/2 acre yard.
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ROCKY HILL \$499,900
STUNNING! Open-concept. 10 rm plus extra space off of MB. Vaulted ceilings – super large closets. All season rm 1st flr office/bdrm.
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ROCKY HILL \$222,900
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EAST HARTFORD \$135,000
RANCH Motivated seller. FP/LR. Large kit. 3 oversized bdrms. Newer roof, windows. Close to Glastonbury. Offers welcomed!
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WETHERSFIELD \$229,900
CUSTOM Brick Ranch in neighborhood setting. 6 rms. Master Bdrm with full bath. Stone FP. Refinished flrs. Finished LL. Irrigation sys.
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EAST HARTFORD \$240,500
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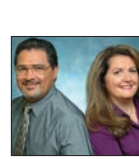
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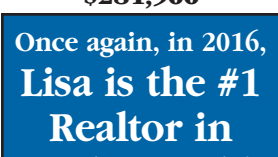
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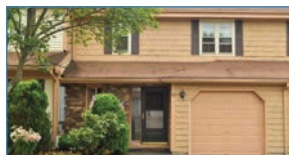
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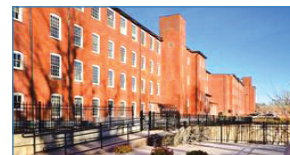
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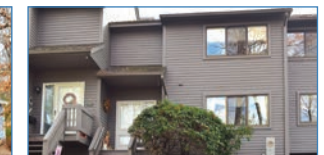
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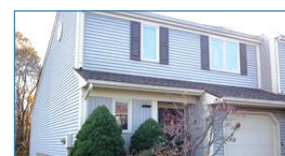
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Networking at the nature center



The Eleanor Buck Wolf Nature Center hosted the Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce for a Business After Hours networking event the evening of Feb. 2. Sanjay "Sammy" Shah of Buy-Rite Liquors pours a glass wine for Garrett Hughes, treasurer of the Friends of the Eleanor Buck Wolf Nature Center board of directors.

Photos by Mark Jahne



Among those in attendance were, from left, chamber board member Sandy Cook; Kathleen Bagley, director of parks and recreation as well as youth and social services for the town; and Beverly Lucas, foundation director of the Cedar Hill Cemetery Foundation.



New nature center Director Patrick Telman holds a rabbit, one of many residents of the facility at 156 Prospect St. at the entrance to Mill Woods Park.



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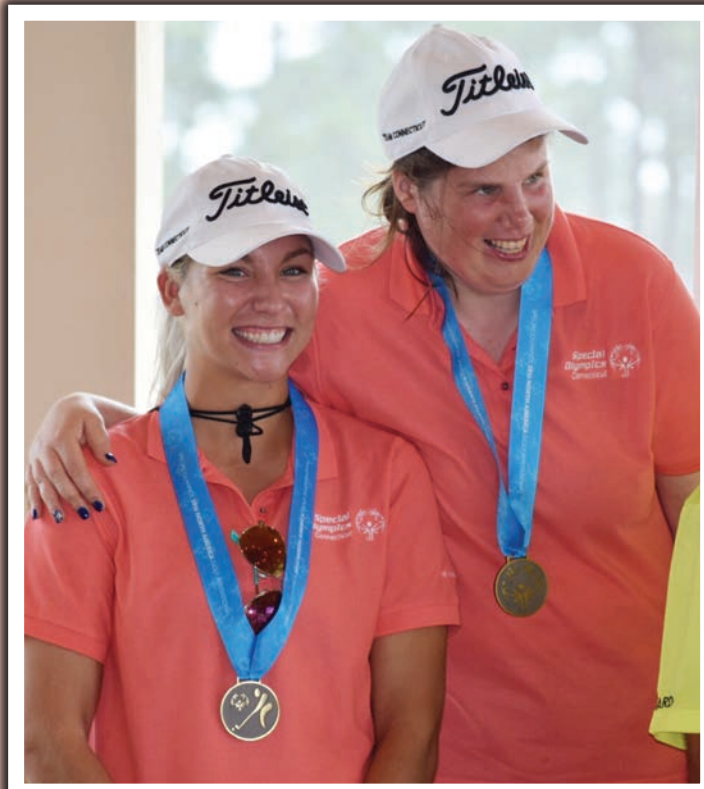
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Bonding on the golf course

Courtesy photos

The Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Department held a Special Olympics Unified Golf Program at the Goodwin Golf Course. The program was well attended, doubling in size from the previous year. Local athletes and their peer partners have strengthened their skill performance and continue to grow community ties thanks to the financial support of the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) of America: Connecticut Section.



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Robert Chellstorp and Dan Gornicz

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Courtesy photo

Dillon demonstrates one of his techniques at a training class for sheriffs in Imperial County, California.

Sharing his expertise

Kevin Dillon trains police officers to a higher level

by Mark Jahne
Editor

Law enforcement personnel face many challenges in the course of their careers. Some can result in injury, lawsuits or other unwelcome results.

Kevin Dillon of Wethersfield is working to change all that through advanced training techniques. That's why he created the LOCKUP Police Combat System through his business, KFD Training and Consultation LLC.

LOCKUP is an acronym for Law Officers Combat Kinetics Unarmed Panoply.

His classes are offered throughout the United States and in an increasing number of countries throughout the world. He has a cadre of 15 instructors to assist him, as well as two part-time staff members.

Dillon retired at the rank of lieutenant in 2006 after 25 years with the Wethersfield Police Department, where he served as detective commander, patrol commander and training supervisor.

A regional SWAT member since 1993, he spent six years as a team leader and his last three years as commander of the team.

"We had a lot of activity with SWAT," he said.

He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and is certified by the Force Science Institute for Analysis of Use of Force Incidents and by the Institute of Prevention of In Custody Deaths for Use of Force and Excited Delirium.

"I started training cops in 1989. I started my martial arts training when I was 14 years old," he said.

Dillon earned a fourth-degree black belt in Kenpo Karate, a third-degree black belt in Ju Jitsu, and has studied other systems including Shodokan and Tae Kwon Do. He was inducted into the United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame as a law enforcement instructor in 2005.

His first martial arts teacher was Carl Thomas, a Green Beret veteran of the Vietnam War. Thomas was a police officer in Dillon's native town of Windsor and the young main trained and often rode along with his mentor, whetting his appetite for a career in law enforcement.

He was hired by the Wethersfield Police Department at the age of 19 and quickly qualified to receive additional training. Modern regulations require police candidates to be at least 21 years old.

Attending the FBI Academy is one of the highlights of his life.

"That was a changing and deciding factor in my career. That was also my drive to create effective and realistic training," Dillon said.

His "retirement job" enables him to travel as much as he wants.

"I turn [some] international contracts away only because I want to teach domestically," he said.

Dillon developed and teaches his registered LOCKUP defensive tactics arrest and control system. This is a comprehensive approach, based on gross motor skill concepts, to quickly and effectively control a situation.

"The faster it's controlled, the fewer injuries to suspects and officers. I had a guy try to kill me once. He was emotionally disturbed," he recalled.

His simple mantra is that, when facing an aggressor, a police officer will fight the way he or she is trained, so the better the training, the better the outcome.

LOCKUP teaches empty-handed maneuvers that can be effectively deployed during violent physical altercations. It adapts specific fighting maneuvers to fit an officer's physical and physiological changes

"The faster it's controlled, the fewer injuries to suspects and officers."

-Kevin Dillon

during these altercations and is not based upon any single martial art or fighting system.

"I've been fortunate. Our [program] is extremely effective and evidence based," he said. "I've trained thousands of cops over the past 10 years. What made me extremely successful is the diversification of the product."

He educates them about the instinctual physiological and physical responses of the human nervous system during combat. He said his system is evidence based, court tested, consistent with and based upon the legal guidelines governing police use of force, and is appropriate for all officers, regardless of physical attributes.

Dillon also focuses on tracking and trending all use of force deployments. LOCKUP is being instructed and used by officers in more than a



Above: Dillon has been interviewed about police procedures on major TV networks such as CNN. **Right:** He may be 55 years old, but Dillon can still quickly take down an opponent. He has black belts in Karate and Ju Jitsu and has also studied other forms of the martial arts.

dozen states as well France, England, Canada, Switzerland, Nigeria and Belgium.

He is confident that LOCKUP is built upon a strong base. He also has taught a use of force class to police command staff in places including Missouri, New Mexico, Colorado and California.

"I had some Ferguson officers in my class," he said.

Ferguson, Missouri, was the scene of a highly publicized incident in which a white officer shot and killed a black teenager during an altercation. It resulted in riots and national news coverage.

His aim is to teach tactics and strategy while also reminding participants to know the big picture. Dillon said police officers get training in many areas of their work but it is not to as high a level as he can offer.

He encourages each police department he visits to analyze use of force data and review what he calls the "game tapes" of its actions, because every community is unique. He also tells them that ineffective use of force in making arrests can easily become excessive and lead to legal liability.

Another skill he teaches is how to initiate communication that can play a role in de-escalating an incident so that force is not needed. That course also involves how to assess a situation by reading body language, detecting verbal cues and identifying pre-attack indicators.

He said, "The most important thing to teach a police officer – is this effective for me and does it have value for my performance?"

Once that is established, his classes enjoy greater learning and retention. He said officers who are there only because they were told to attend then find the time spent in the classroom worthwhile. He receives plenty of positive reviews as a result.

One letter, in particular, moved him deeply. It was from a female officer who was attacked outside her home while off duty. She told him that the lessons she learned in his class not only prevented her from being raped, but also gave her the upper hand in subduing her assailant.

"Your training saved my life," she wrote.

He offers single and multiple-day programs. The intensive nine-day police combat course has been adopted as the arrest and control instructor credential for Rhode Island and Connecticut Police Officers Standards and Training Council instructor certification. The course is the fundamental qualification for teaching in all basic training academy programs.

It has also been implemented in numerous other state academies and law enforcement, security and civilian agencies. He has developed and customized courses for specialized units such as Amtrak's East Coast counter-terrorist and police unit.



Dillon is a Connecticut certified law enforcement instructor of various firearms, impact weapons and less-lethal control devices, use of force, supervision and leadership. He also developed the handcuffing and police baton state instructor curriculum.

Course selections include such topics as arrest and control, communications, firearms, SWAT, police use of force for executives and middle management, diffusion strategies in the workplace, school violence, and tactics for school security and police resource officers.

His business plan is take on three new states each calendar year. Dillon and/or his instructors will do just that in 2017 in Alaska, Texas and Tennessee. South Dakota is another possibility.

One of his closest friends and

occasional co-trainer is Geoff Anderson. A retired Newington police sergeant, Anderson is a Newington volunteer firefighter and is employed full time training recruits for municipal departments at the police academy in Meriden.

"The skills that he trains are second to none. I've had the opportunity to train with him for 20 years. He's like lightning" when it comes to subduing a suspect, Anderson said. "He's a believer in strategy and tactics."

He also spoke about Dillon's emphasis on communication and his engaging personality. He makes those he is training feel like they are part of his family.

"He wants to treat everybody respectfully, especially the officers that he trains," Anderson said. **WL**

To learn more, visit policecombat.com.

People notes

David Marottolo, a student at Kingswood Oxford School, won top prize at the Choate Rosemary Hall debate for first place advanced speaker.

Patrick Adams, Daniela Akaratovic, Stephen Ballard, Mark Cloutier, Abigail Davis, Jennifer Elmasllari, Megan Fabi, Margaret Fitzpatrick, Peter Fulton, Azam Handzic, Emma Harris, Emma Huntington, Christopher Jablonka, Jack Janssen, Kyrystyna Kukhtyn, Morgan Leonard, Sara Luiz, Adam Lynch, Samantha Martin, Reia Massaro, Abigale Monasterial, Greidy Montavo-Fulcar, Benjamin Ng, Hannah Nguyen, Paige Nichols, Grace Nichols, Veronica Pita, Navarre Pratt, Filiza Preniqi, Nicolas Pytel, Michael Rago, Jasmin Sabanovic, Eldina Salihovic, David Scales, Scott Seigle, Brianna Shive, Manuel Silva, Liliana Silva, Kristen Southwick, Kristi Spiri, Mario Suljoti, Rodolfo Valentini, Gauri Verma, George Williams, Corinne Zazzaro and Gloria Zhu were named to the dean's list at the University of Connecticut.

Sara Aguilar was named to the

dean's list in the Barney School of Business at the University of Hartford.

Kelly Hoisl, Jacob Skowronek, Michael O'Leary, Anthony Bruno, Andrew Cravero, Meaghan Szilagyi, Analissa Mandile, Madeline Fulton and Troy Stegman were named to the dean's list at the University of Rhode Island.

Brianna Gillette and Matthew Ferris were named to the dean's list at Lasell College.

Sierra Colon, Justin Jensen, Sabina Mamedova and Samantha Walter earned scholarships at Eastern Connecticut State University.

Kayla Generis, Caitlin Gray and Nicole Varca were named to the dean's list at Emmanuel College.

Sara Garrey was named to the dean's list at Keene State College.

Jenna Brown was named to the dean's list at Dean College.

Kyle MacRae was honored for outstanding academic achievement at Bentley University.

Alaina Kendrick and Jacqueline Kendrick were named to the dean's list at Assumption College.

Jason Renaud was named to the dean's list at Belmont University.

Raegan Light, Deniz Camli-Saunders, Ryan Martinez, Dhanraj Bhoj and Ananya Krishnan earned high honors for



David Marottolo

the second marking period at the University High School of Science and Engineering. Christopher Light earned honors.

Kassandrah Banks, Alexandria Casertano, James Dignoti, Rachel DiNatalie, Andrew Falce, Justin Jensen, Kaylee Kolodziejczyk, Sabina Mamedova, Kelly Pietropaoli, Jamie Piscitello, Alyssa Santos, Gregory Schroeder, Christopher Shimwell, Nicole Silva, Rachel Silva, Kelsey Sullivan, Molly Underwood-Scherban, Samantha Walter and Max Walter were named to the dean's list at Eastern Connecticut State University.

Thomas Betts, Alessia Caruso, Amanda Civitello, Charlotte Cyr, Harim Hahn, Elizabeth Hammer, Max-William Kanz, Matthew Marottolo, David

Marottolo, Amrita Natarajan, Ambika Natarajan, Taline Norsigian, Adam Ovia and Qianyun Wang were named to the first semester honor roll at Kingswood Oxford School.

Andrea Bucknam was named to the dean's list at the College of the Holy Cross.

Kayla Generis, Caitlin Gray and Nicole Varca were named to the dean's list at Emmanuel College.

Connor Jones, Carly Nixon and Rachel Sharp were named to the dean's list at the University of Delaware.

Rachel Lombardi, Mario Marena and Carissa Peckrul were named to the dean's list at Roger Williams University.

Kevin Smith was named top the dean's list at Seton Hall University. **WL**

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Slice of LIFE

photos by Mark Jahne



UNICO Famous Macaroni Dinner

It may have been snowing outside, but hundreds of people still turned out at the Pitkin Community Center for the annual UNICO Famous Macaroni Dinner. The always popular pasta, meatballs, salad, garlic bread and more pleased palates and raised funds for the club's charitable efforts. **1.** Former Mayor Dan Camilliere was among the people who greeted those in the food line. **2.** Macaroni dinner Chairman John Console and Morris Borea take a break from the action. **3.** Mike Rizzo Jr., left, and Phil Civitello served up water and soda. **4.** Tony Cavallaro, left and Frank Dellaripa brush the bread with melted butter and garlic. **5.** Tony Santucci and Emidio Pizzoferrato added salad, grated cheese and crushed pepper to the meals. **6.** Nick Deramo ladles out piping hot servings of pasta. **7.** All of the pasta is cooked outside under the shelter of a tent. This year's cooking crew included, from left, Dom Fusco, Charley Nardi, John Aforismo, Joe Spinoso and Marty Massaro. **8.** Tom and Michele Vaughan were on hand to help. He is executive vice president of UNICO National and she performed her usual task selling cannolis. **9.** Pietro Aiello wore this colorful hat for the occasion. **10.** Gaetano Pattrizzi helped sell raffle tickets for the many prizes available to diners.



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Churro

Churro is a tiny 2-month-old Chihuahua mix. He's a feisty little puppy who needs to be housebroken and also needs training, exercise and socialization. Mandatory obedience and socialization training are part of his adoption plan. He has already been neutered.



Garfield

Garfield is a neutered male domestic shorthair mix. He's 8 years old and enjoys a nice nap just like the comic strip cat of the same name. He is best suited for a home with children who are over the age of 8. He's quiet, reserved and FIV positive, so he should not live with other cats unless they also have FIV. **WL**

Inquiries about adoption may be made at the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Road, Newington. Call 860-594-4500. More information, including videos, can be found online at cthumane.org. Click on "Adopt" and "Newington." The Connecticut Humane Society is a private organization and has no time limits for adoption.

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Editorial

What to do about Hartford's fiscal woes?

by Mark Jahne
Editor

Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin has toured several central Connecticut suburbs seeking any support he can find for his financially ailing city. It's been a hard sell, but he knew that would be the case from the outset.

The city is facing a \$50 million budget shortfall that is projected to increase to \$70 million or more next year. There are several reasons for this.

Prior mayors and City Councils practiced reckless and irresponsible spending. They borrowed too much. They entered into questionable projects, the prime example being the Dunkin' Donuts minor league baseball stadium.

They negotiated contracts that, in some instances, paid outrageously high pensions to retired city employees. It should be noted that this is no longer the case.

When debt came due, they renegotiated that fiscal responsibility in a dangerous manner and did what the politicians in Washington, D.C., do all the time – kicked the can down the road. The problem now is the road has reached an end and the can cannot be kicked any further.

The primary source of the problem is Connecticut's heavy reliance on the property tax to fund municipal budgets, more than any other state. This system works much better in a rural or suburban environment than it does in an urban community.



Photo by Mark Jahne

Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin has toured several central Connecticut suburbs seeking any support he can find for his financially ailing city.

More than half of the land in Hartford is tax-exempt: state buildings, hospitals, colleges and more. The city is supposed to recoup a portion of that tax value through a program called PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) but state government has not fully funded that for years.

It's a recipe for disaster and that's exactly what is staring Bronin and other city leaders in the face.

He does have options, but they range from bad to terrible. He has taken admirable steps to stem the tide of red ink, but the numbers show that simply raising taxes or cutting spending to the bone will not solve the problem.

The city's tax rate is already 74 mills. That heavy burden has driven out many small and even medium-sized businesses. Why should they stay in

Hartford when they can relocate to a suburb where the mill rate is in the 30s or low 40s?

Bankruptcy is one of his options, but that would have harmful ripple effects on all of the other cities and towns in central Connecticut. Businesses will either leave or decline to locate here. Jobs will be lost. Homes will face foreclosure.

The best possible solutions are an increase in PILOT money, a share of the state's sales tax – not just for Hartford, but for all 169 cities and towns – or a change in the property tax dependency.

But in a year when state government is trying to solve a more than \$1 billion deficit of its own, that's a tall order. The next few months will reveal how much the state can, or is willing, to help Hartford and its other major cities. **WL**

wethersfield LIFE

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			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

1 Wethersfield-Rocky Hill Professional Nurses Association, 7 p.m., Pitkin Community Center, 30 Greenfield St., 860-563-4150

4 My Avenging Angel Workshop, 10:30 a.m., Hartford Healthcare, 1290 Silas Deane Highway, registration required, 860-545-1888, part two is on March 11

Herbal Sleep Pillow Workshop, 2 p.m., registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

7 Streaming Technology, 6:30 p.m., registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

Time to Talk, 7:30 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org, also March 7, 14, 21 and 28

8 Hoopla Technology Class, 2 p.m., registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

Stop Motion Animation Workshop, 2:30 p.m., for grades 7-12, registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

9 Bristlebot — Make Your Own Robot, 2:30 p.m., for grades 7-12, registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

Katharine Hepburn: From Hartford to Hollywood, 7 p.m., Keeney Memorial Cultural Center, 200 Main St., \$5 admission, free for Wethersfield Historical Society members, 860-529-7656 or wethersfieldhistory.org

11 Saturday Cinema: “Young Frankenstein,” 1:30 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

150 Prospect Coffeehouse, 6:30 p.m., Wethersfield United Methodist Church, 150 Prospect St., 860-614-5158 or tanjam@comcast.net

13 Microsoft PowerPoint Basics, 6:30 p.m., registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

16 Insider Secrets to Travel, 6:30 p.m., registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

19 The Jolly Beggars in Concert, 4 p.m., Keeney Memorial Cultural Center, 200 Main St., 860-529-7656 or wethersfieldhistory.org

21 Teen Matinee: “Secret Life of Pets,” 2:30 p.m., for grades 7-12, registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

22 Facebook Basics, 2 p.m., registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

25 Terrarium Making Workshop, 2 p.m., registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

27 Microsoft Excel Basics, 6:30 p.m., registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

28 GFWC Newington/ Wethersfield Woman’s Club, 6:30 p.m., Jefferson House, 1 John H. Stewart Drive, Newington, 860-310-7015

Library Board, 7 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

Is your club, community organization, school or house of worship holding an event open to the general public? If so, please send us the details for inclusion in our calendar. Email your events to Mark Jahne at mjahne@turleyct.com or mail them to Turley CT Community Publications, 540 Hopmeadow St., Simsbury, CT 06070.

Events *spotlight*

Katharine Hepburn: From Hartford to Hollywood

March 9, 7 p.m.

*Keeney Memorial Cultural
Center, 200 Main St.*

860-529-7656 or

wethersfieldhistory.org

The Wethersfield Historical Society and Cedar Hill Cemetery and Foundation present this special lecture and slideshow by Natalie Belanger of the Connecticut Historical Society. This presentation will link Hepburn's career and legacy to her roots in Connecticut to demonstrate how she achieved

her truly extraordinary legacy. Admission is free for Wethersfield Historical Society members and Cedar Hill Cemetery and Foundation members and \$5 for others. Tickets will be sold at the door. This lecture is supported by the Robert Allen Keeney Memorial Fund at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.

The Jolly Beggars in Concert

March 19, 4 p.m.

*Keeney Memorial Cultural
Center, 200 Main St.*

860-529-7656 or

wethersfieldhistory.org

Katharine Hepburn



Courtesy photos



The Jolly Beggars

This Connecticut-based band brings the rich tradition of Celtic folk music and storytelling to modern day audiences. Characterized by their tight harmonies and use of guitars, mandolin, mandola, tenor banjo,

double bass, bodhran, spoons and more, the Jolly Beggars will perform in a cocktail table cabaret style of seating; bring your own bottle. Tickets are \$10 for Wethersfield Historical Society members and \$12 for non-members, and may be purchased at the door. **WL**

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Get Cozy



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Get Cozy

A cozy home

Design tips that bring comfort on chilly days

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Chuckles, Connecticut's answer to Punxsutawney Phil, may be predicting an early spring, but that doesn't mean there aren't still plenty of chilly days and even colder nights ahead. Since home is not only where the heart is, but also where most of us hunker down when the calendar turns from merry and bright to dreary and dank, we asked design experts for their best tips, big and small, to make your favorite rooms cozier.

Use the walls

Liz Goldberg of Goldberg Design LLC in Glastonbury said that comfort is all around you.

"One thing that I think makes a family or living room cozier is upholstered walls. I've used them in many areas. It not only looks amazing with all of the beautiful fabrics available, but, functionally, it helps with noise reverberation and you know how cozy a room feels when you can sit and have a nice conversation or hear the music playing softly," she said. "When you're in a room and you can sit next to someone and have a nice quiet conversation, that makes it feel more intimate, and cozy to me is intimate."

Goldberg said there are numerous techniques and fabrics to choose, including cotton, vinyl and leather looks. In addition to changing the feel of a room, it can serve a practical purpose as well.

"It's a great method if you bought an older home or a condo and there's

old-fashioned paneling. You put this over the wall and it hides a multitude of sins," she said.

It is a job that's best left to the professionals.

"You have to know what you're doing or it can get messy looking," Goldberg noted.

She said that some clients pick one wall to feature, while others decide to use fabric on all their walls.

"It's a similar feeling as when there's a bare window and then you put a drape on the window. It softens the effect and gives you an opportunity to introduce color and texture in the room on another surface you might not have thought of. It can really transform a space," she said.

Accent with a personal touch

Heather Grahling, owner of Vivid Hue Home, a gift and home decor boutique in Farmington, believes that adding accents that are meaningful to you will help make any room feel warm and welcoming.

"A side table

suddenly becomes more alluring with a special vase filled with blooms. Place treasures found during family travels on top of a coffee table and add layers with stacks of personal interest books. These personal accessories not only provide a cozy touch, they will add layers to your room that will ultimately result in a homier feel."



Get Cozy

Grahling said.

She puts this into practice in her own home.

"One of my favorite coffee table accents is a brass lobster that I found while thrifting on vacation in Kennebunkport. I bought the lobster for a steal and set it on top of design books on my coffee table. It reminds me of my summer at the beach and also adds a nice conversation piece when guests ask about it," she said.

She also uses photos to add a special feel.

"In today's age of social media, most of my family photos are on my phone or Facebook. A few years ago, I started selecting my favorite digital photos and creating a printed flip book. There are many inexpensive apps that make this task very easy," she noted. "Now, in addition to my favorite interior design books, I also stack my family photo books onto the coffee table. It's personal and meaningful and makes my home feel more lived in."

She also uses art in a similar way.

"I love art of any kind. I have a small collection of pieces from gallery artists that I started curating a few years ago. But my ultimate favorite thing to do is to take my

children's artwork and frame it and display it proudly on our walls. I display their artwork right alongside the gallery pieces," she said. "I love this eclectic mix and, even more importantly, each piece means something to me."

Appeal to all the senses

Julie Levine of West Hartford and Glastonbury's Kim Lamagna, partners in Luxury Living for Less, believes in appealing to multiple senses.

"Color, texture, sound and even taste can add to a room's coziness and ambiance," Levine explained.

She said you might want to create a reading nook within another room in your home, such as a den.

"Start with just a small corner of the room. If you're lucky to have a fireplace, you're halfway there. If not, group together some wonderful candles to cast that warm glow," she said. "Start with a soft wool rug of earthy tones, add one or two comfy chairs with a chenille fabric. Add a soft fuzzy or faux fur throw and pillow, and an ottoman to put your feet up. Place a small table nearby

with great books. Add a table or floor lamp that you can dim. Pour yourself a warm beverage to soothe your soul, and you've got an instant cozy space to relax and enjoy."

Comfort a child

It's not just grown-ups who crave a cozy environment. Michele Cottone Kriticos of MCK Interiors, LLC in Wethersfield, said that a faux fireplace can add a comforting dimension to a child's room.

"There are new ones on the market that are so real both in appearance and functionality. They give the ambiance of crackling wood and the warmth of their embers," she noted. "So many children ask to keep the night light on at bedtime. Placing a faux fireplace in their room will not only give them a soft glow of light, but a rhythmic soothing sound of crackling wood to fall asleep to. It also defuses noise from other areas of the house."

During the day, it may even spark your child's imagination, providing relaxing play options.

"By day they can set up a fireside tea party," she suggested. **WHL**

"Start with a soft wool rug of earthy tones, add one or two comfy chairs with a chenille fabric. Add a soft fuzzy or faux fur throw and pillow, and an ottoman to put your feet up. Place a small table nearby with great books. Add a table or floor lamp that you can dim. Pour yourself a warm beverage to soothe your soul, and you've got an instant cozy space to relax and enjoy."

—Julie Levine

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Get Cozy

Snuggle up

'Tis the season for warm beverages and tasty treats

by **Alicia B. Smith**
Associate Editor

It's snowing, it's raining and you do not have to be anywhere. It is the perfect time to grab your favorite blanket, settle into your favorite chair with your book and just enjoy the afternoon. The only thing missing is a warm cup of something and a tasty bite to nibble on.

For some that might mean a cup of tea with a sweet treat, some cookies or a piece of cake, perhaps?

When it comes to tea, there are more options available than one might think that range from the savory to the sweet.

At Culteavo in Farmington, owner Viviana Pinhasi is passionate about

tea and often holds tea pairings that share what to serve with tea.

"Tea with food may be a similar concept that you do when you pair wine with food," she said. Like wine, a food can complement the tea and

enhance certain aspects of the tea or food.

White tea, for example, has a delicate flavor and is best served with something light or served on its own. Fruit is a good option; apples can



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Get Cozy

balance the flavor, while something like berries intensify the flavor of the tea.

White tea is not processed; rather the leaves are harvested and left to dry. Preparing white tea is simple. Loose leaf tea is put in an infuser; it is best to use 175-degree water and allow the tea to steep for 3 minutes.

Green tea, Pinhasi said, has a stronger, more vegetablelike flavor and tends to be on the salty side. Green tea, she said, goes well with Chinese or Japanese food, or fish dishes. She recommended not having it with Indian food, which is too spicy and would not match well with the spinachlike qualities of the green tea.

White chocolate with matcha, a Chinese spice, goes well with green tea, too.

Because of the green tea's unique flavor, Pinhasi suggests only steeping it for one minute.

An oolong tea is something between a green and black tea and tends to have more caffeine than the green variety.

"It will remind you of a tradition-

al black tea, slightly spicy, more robust," Pinhasi said.

A good pairing with oolong is cheese. A good brie, which is a creamy cheese, will help to bring out the sweetness of the oolong. Parmesan is also a good choice, as that will bring out the spiciness of the tea.

Oolong, Pinhasi said, is best steeped with 185-degree water and steeped for two minutes.

Finally, there is the black tea. This variety is fairly common and usually comes from India. It tends to have a strong flavor and can be made with boiling water and steeped for as long as five minutes.

For those who have a sweet tooth, black tea is a great option to enjoy with scones or shortbread.

Pinhasi likes to enjoy a plain scone with some hibiscus-infused butter.

She also offers an interesting option at her tea shop: honey infused with smoked tea.

All teas come from the same

plant, the variations from white to black and everything in between is created through the different ways of processing the leaves. Leaves are simply dried for white tea, leaves are harvested then dehydrated to make green tea. To make oolong tea, the leaves are allowed to start to oxidize before being exposed to heat that stops this process. With black tea, the oxidation process continues for a longer period of time.

For those who think that tea is a stuffy drink, the kind where a pinky is held out while taking dainty sips, Pinhasi said it is fine to slurp tea. Doing so, she said, allows air to be drawn in with each sip and helps to enhance the flavor of the tea.

There is also a way to get around the temperature differences for having the best cup of tea. That is to try an electric teakettle that enables the user to select a temperature, thus assuring the perfect cup of tea.

When it comes to coffee, there are staunch supporters of simply drinking the java straight up and not bothering

with a bite.

That is how Marie Engel, co-owner and manager of J. Renee Coffee Roasters in West Harford, enjoys her coffee.

"When I come in in the morning I have my 'Marie-acano.' It's an Americano, they put a little spin on it. That's it for me," she said.

There are others, Engel noted, that prefer to eat something with their coffee.

There are those who prefer to have something savory. The shop offers a Greek spanakopita, spinach and feta wrapped in phyllo dough.

"It's something to go with plain coffee," Engel said.

"People who like milk-based drinks like something sweet," she said, adding that these folks gravitate toward scones.

"It's a matter of taste," Engel said.

"What really sells, because our coffees are espresso-based, is biscotti," Engel continued. "They like to dip it in their coffee. It's very traditional. It's the Italian way." **WL**

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Get Cozy

Netflix and *knit*

Chunky sweaters are chic this season along with other cozy crafts

by Sloan Brewster
Staff Writer

Knitting a chunky sweater is a great

way to while away the hours in the winter and it's also very fashionable.

According to Marion Carling, owner of Village Wool in Glastonbury, super bulky yarn, which is knit using giant needles, is in this year.

It's great "if you're a millennial and want to look chic," she said.

"You can make a chunky sweater in a couple hours in front of Netflix."

Carling has knit a scarf out of bulky yarn, but during the blizzard on Thursday, Feb. 9, she was organizing her craft room and getting ready to make hats using thinner yarn.

Knitting hats is just one of the many crafts that are perfect ways to keep warm and cozy when it's cold and snowy. The finished product is also useful for the season.

Taking on a hat is about a five-hour project, though most people tend to knit for an hour or so at a

time, Carling said.

"It is a quick project. Sweaters and shawls take longer," Carling said. "Uses up a small amount of yarn."

Carling also crochets, which she said, is quicker than knitting.

"If you want something really, really warm, crocheting is good for that," she said.

Crocheting is done using double stitches, which makes the end result thicker and warmer, making it great for blankets and throws, though, it's not exclusively for the thick and warm creations.

"The opposite can be true, too," Carling said. "You can make things

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very racy, open for summer.”

Another perk to knitting and crocheting is that they are portable, meaning you can take them with you, have them on hand to pass the time in a variety of places and situations from a game to a mechanic’s shop.

Ann Wincze, of Blumen Laden in Canton takes knitting to a different level. After she makes mittens and hats, she felts them.

She intentionally makes them oversized, then puts them in the washing machine in hot water to felt them.

“When you agitate the wool it shrinks,” Wincze said. “The wool becomes really, really dense. It’s much warmer than a knitted mitten.”

Making felted mittens is a craft that is well-known to fishermen’s wives, Wincze said. In addition, to being warmer, because they are so dense and thick, they are also waterproof.

Wincze also knits scarves, but she doesn’t felt them because it’s not necessary, she said.

She makes wreaths, too, but that’s a craft for other times of the year, she said.

“The wreaths you do in the spring or the summer and the fall and Christmas,” she said.

Marilyn Gattinella, co-owner of Close to Home in Glastonbury, likes to quilt. This winter she has been giving a class on making appliqué blocks.

Appliqué is a French term for applying shapes to a background,

such as a square piece of fabric, Gattinella said. It could be a cutout of a home or pet, or in the case of the quilts she and her students have been making in class, flowers.

“The sections of the quilt are squares with flowers on them,” she said.

Gattinella quilts on a sewing machine, which makes it easy to socialize while doing her craft because the sewing machine can be set up in the family room or by the fireplace, she said.

“Conceivably, you could be sitting at your sewing machine and visiting with your family,” Gattinella said.

She was planning to catch up on stitching during the snowstorm.

“I can’t wait to be sitting down at my sewing machine and do my stitching,” she said.

Quilting is more than a way to pass a few hours, it’s about making something from the imagination.

“First of all, it’s an example of creating. There are so many different avenues that a quilter could travel down that there’s something for everybody, an extension of your personality, a way to share with others,” Gattinella said. “Quilters are very famous for sharing.”

Quilting can be used for making things such as pillows, table runners and purses.

It’s also great to do in the winter.

“The whole winter thing is that we’re indoors in our industry, we’re not competing with the garden or the

boat or the beach home,” Gattinella said.

It’s also a great thing to do when all the hard work is finished.

“Your family obligations are taken care of and now the me time comes,” Gattinella said.

In March, Close to Home will host a sew-a-thon skirt making day for the Whole in the Wall Gang Camp. The skirts will be made out of pieces of T-shirts.

The proceeds will go to the camp.

Not all crafts are for doing at home. At The Claypen, West Hartford, you can paint your own pottery

The inventory changes seasonally, with incense holders and wax warmers and such on the shelves in winter, said Manager Stephanie Yearsley. What’s more, it’s a great place to thaw out after being out in the cold.

“Our kiln always keeps it warm in here,” Yearsley said. “It’s always cozy in here.”

Painting pottery can be for the family and children, or for a girls night out. There is something on the shelves for everyone and feel free to bring a snack or a bottle of wine to enjoy.

“We have a ton of choices of pottery to choose from: useful to fun, funny stuff,” Yearsley said. “You can make yourself a set of dishes or mugs.”

Staff is on hand to assist and to offer suggestions or inspiration, or to help with the technical aspects,

such as tracing designs, making geometric shapes or painting over lace, Yearsley said.

“It makes a cool design. We have a bucket of lace,” she said. “People are always pleased with what they create. We have a saying our kilns are magical.”

Staff will also help set things up for children, and there is a special child-friendly palette that has colors that don’t turn brown when mixed together.

“We all know that kids will blend it all up,” Yearsley said.

Yearsley enjoys when children come back to get their fired masterpiece, she said.

The Claypen also offers glass fusing. The craft involves cutting glass into shapes and having it fired in the kiln. It can be made into anything from a dish to a business card holder.

“There’s all different colors and shapes and sizes,” Yearsley said. “It goes through the kiln twice. The second time it’s over the mold.”

Sandy Clifford of Scene Art Bar in Unionville recommends a night of sip & paint.

The bar offers instructor-led painting projects with step-by-step instructions so that even beginners leave with a completed painting.

There’s also pick-your-own-painting night, a new offering that gives customers the chance to choose any painting from the bar’s library, she said. **WL**

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Get Cozy

Warm up

There's still time to get cozy by the fire

by Lynn Woike
LIFE Staff

Warm and cozy go together, and it's hard to be warm when heat is going up the chimney.

"The heat in your home is escaping up that chimney, even with a fire going," said Sherry Kozikowski, co-owner of Valley Fireplace and Stove in Canton. "The damper has to be open for the smoke to exit, but heat can exit, too. Generally, people leave the damper open all the time, so more heat escapes up the chimney."

For that reason, she suggests a glass door enclosure over the front of the fireplace that can remain open while enjoying a fire, and then closed for all other times.

Kozikowski also recommends installing a supplemental heating system such as a wood, pellet or gas stove that will not only stop the heat from escaping, it will become a supplemental heating system. From the time a choice is made to completed installation is one to two weeks.

"Gas is the cheapest," she said, which could be one of the reasons it's also the most popular.

"It's so easy," she said. "No hauling wood or pellets ... [and] it can come on automatically."

Avon Plumbing & Heating, located in Avon, has been installing a wide variety of gas log fireplace sets in new and existing homes and condominiums.

"It eliminates the hassle of burning wood and burns considerably cleaner," according to Stacy Moore, project manager and designer. "With the click of a button, you transform your fireplace into a beautiful, warm, glowing fire anywhere in your home. The gas fireplace sets can be installed with either propane or natural gas.

The project takes only a day, providing the chimney is clean and a gas line has already been installed.

Projects can take up to three weeks if additional renovations are desired, such as resurfacing or encasing the fireplace or adding a cabinet to hold a flat screen television above it.

"You can be creative," Moore said, because even if you do not have a fireplace in your home, you can add a gas firebox created from a metal hearth with a wood surround.

A fireplace will be the focus of whatever room it's in. Originally, their mantels were installed to catch smoke, but have since become more of a decorative piece.

"If you want to cozy it up," Hayley Bryden, a designer at Ehrlich Interiors in Farmington, recom-

mended "replacing the basic shelf of a mantel with a large piece of reclaimed wood. To give more visual interest to this concept, try incorporating some ornate brackets underneath the reclaimed wood."

Building a surround to encase it is another decorating option.

"Bookcases are super cozy," she said. "They can be used to display much more than books and can be filled with family photos in decorative frames."

To accessorize, Bryden likes to place a large mirror over the fireplace. "It could be an antique if that's your style," she said.

Lighting, such as sconces on either side of the fireplace, can also add warmth, complementing the fire below.

To accessorize a wooden mantel, she said add iron, such as a large sculptured piece, along with a few smaller items.

But none of that is even necessary.

Just making a fire makes for a cozier atmosphere, said Kurt Wabrek, who with his wife, owns New England Patio and Hearth with stores in Canton and Wethersfield. Only three things are essential: dry wood, a poker and a spark guard. Grates, tool sets and screens come in a variety of styles, so that choosing them "is a matter of personal taste as well as function."

While it's common sense, he said it bears repeating that safety is key. The flue should be open before a fire is lit and ashes must be disposed of safely. **WL**

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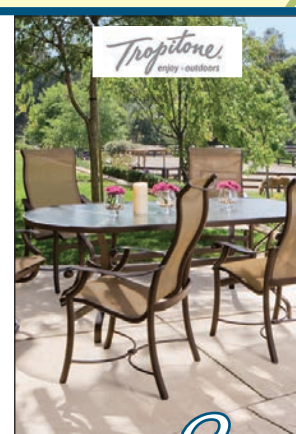


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BY MARK DIXON
WFSB METEOROLOGIST [AMS]



In like a lion, out like a lamb?

The month of March is one that can be beautiful, but also quite volatile here in Connecticut.

When it comes to temperature – on the first day of the month 24 degrees is the average low, 42 is the average high. By the end of the month, the average

low goes up to 33 while the high warms to 54. Not a bad, as we transition from winter to spring, officially on the 20th (at 6:29 a.m.) with the Vernal Equinox. When it comes to the extremes of the month, the coldest temperature was achieved in 1967 and 2003 when the low was -6 (on the 19th and 7th, respectively).

Also since records have been kept, for the Greater Hartford Area, 89 degrees is the warmest it has been – on the 31st in 1998.

When it comes to snow, March is historically a month featuring some of the more notable storms. Take for instance the Blizzard of 1888, over 50 inches of snow fell

in Middletown. Then more recently, there was the Storm of the Century (Storm Josh), on the 13th in 1993. An event that brought over a foot of snow, a lot of sleet, and a strong wind. So by no means are we immune to the bigger ones, but the average (based on a 30 year timespan) is just 6.4 inches. **WL**



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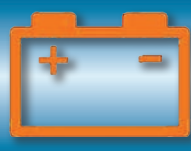
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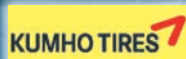
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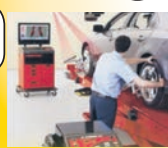


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